Revamping of kerosene network

*133. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
SHRI R.P. GOENKA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to revamp kerosene distribution network in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) how far this will help to control diversion of kerosene supplied through PDS;

(d) whether it is also a fact that a visual campaign is proposed to be launched, through an appropriate theme film, highlighting flooding of the country-side with the poor man's fuel; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and its present status?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) The Government have approved an innovative pilot project of the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas for radically revamping the PDS kerosene distribution network with the primary objective of ensuring that this heavily subsidized project is actually made available in the required quantities at subsidized prices to the intended beneficiaries; and, secondly, to thus cap, reverse and eventually eliminate the diversion of PDS SKO for adulteration. The pilot project is to be implemented in upto 10% of the blocks of the country for a period of six months. Thereafter, the working of the scheme would be independently assessed and, based on the experience gained, Government will consider scaling up the scheme to cover the entire country.

The principal feature of this innovative pilot project are summed up below:

(i) Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) will establish at least one Kerosene (SKO) dealership in each of the country's development blocks

(at present, less than half the blocks are covered and there is disproportionate, often multiple concentration, in urban blocks);

(ii) in consultation with the District Administration and the wholesale dealer, about 5-10 sub-wholesale points will be located in each block;

(iii) There will be a dedicated fleet of tanker-trucks (TTs) for transportation of PDS kerosene to ensure widespread public information and transparency as these TTs will prominently display the special logo that is being devised for the dedicated fleet. It will be clearly written on the outside of the TT that it is transporting kerosene meant for the Public Distribution System;

(iv) To bring storage dispensing services at SKO dealerships at par with the modern facilities provided at petrol and diesel outlets by OMCs at their own expense, the Ministry's Oil Industry Development Board (OIDB) will fund OMCs to ensure the installation of the following facilities at each of the dealerships covered under the pilot project:

— storage tanks with a minimum capacity of 20 KLs

— electronically metered dispensing pumps

— an adequate number of barrels, appropriately decorated with the special logo, for the delivery of SKO to sub-wholesale points on or more barrel sheds;

(v) Supplies to sub-wholesale points will be made under the direct supervision and responsibility of the OMCs, who will provide an adequate number of barrels, decorated with the special logo, at the sub-wholesale point for the convenient and assured transportation of PDS SKO to the retails points. Similar logos will be displayed on vehicles transporting PDS SKO from wholesale to sub-wholesale points and from there to retail points at Fair Price Shops;

(vi) At each Fair Price Shop, PDS SKO will be stored in barrels with clearly identified logos which the general public can access to determine for themselves the balance availability of PDS SKO at that Fair Price Shop;

(vii) In consultation with State Governments, Panchayats and Gram Sabhas will be empowered to generally supervise the availability of PDS SKO and at subsidised prices, and a reporting mechanism will be put in place for Panchayats/Gram Sabha to report any deficiencies to the State Administration and the OMCs concerned.

At a meeting of State Ministers incharge of Food & Civil Supplies and Panchayati Raj on 29th July 2005, a number of suggestion were made which are being worked into the format of the Pilot Project.

It is hoped that the implementation of this project will lead to a significant breakthrough in the delivery of subsidized SKO to the entitled segments of society and thus contribute to the curbing of diversion for adultration.

(d) to (e) It is proposed to have a massive advertisement campaign through various forms of media, including electronic and print media, to disseminate the information about the scheme amongst the masses. The details are being worked out.

Fluctuation of Stock Market

†*134. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that at present an unprecedented boom is taking place in share market;

(b) whether speculators have any dubious substative role behind this boom;

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to provide relief to the common investors from this sort of fluctuation; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) The movement in the stock indices along with the rates of change is given in the table below:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.